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SUBJECT: FSC OF NOVEMBER 4: U.S. APPEARS ISOLATED FROM
ALLIES BY RUSSIA'S DRAFT MINISTERIAL DECISION ON VD99 REVIEW

REF: STATE 111008

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Classified By: Chief Arms Control Delegate Hugh Neighbour; Reasons 1.4(b)(d).

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Reactions to Russia's draft decision for Ministers to task a review of Vienna Document 1999 dominated the FSC plenary discussion. Most comments were favorable "in principle." Inter alia, Russia proposed presenting the results from a VD99 review to the next OSCE Ministerial meeting in Astana in 2010. Russia also would request the OSCE Secretary General to submit ten year's worth of statistical data on VD99 implementation to the FSC by February 1, 2010.

¶2. (SBU) The U.S. was alone in its arguments against the Russian proposal, underscoring instead interest to "strengthen current arms control and CSBM instruments." Indeed, Turkey, Germany, Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, Luxembourg, Kazakhstan, and Greece swiftly expressed varying degrees of support for Russia's unhelpful proposal. Allies which we believe share U.S. concerns were silent. Russia also presented two other suggestions for the agenda and modalities for the AIAM (in Working Group A) and on Issues Relevant to the FSC (in Working Group B), both of which centered on VD99 language compatible with Russia's draft decision. The FSC received Ukraine's proposal for a draft Ministerial Declaration on non-proliferation. Preliminary reactions to Ukraine's proposal were generally positive. End summary.

FSC Plenary: one hour for general statements!

¶3. (SBU) Under General Statements, Ukraine's Ambassador Velchenko made a special appearance to introduce its draft proposal for a Ministerial Declaration on Non-Proliferation. The statement noted that adoption of the OSCE declaration at the Athens Ministerial would "send a strong signal to all NPT member states." Kazakhstan (Mayermanov), Greece (Kalpadakis), the U.S. (Neighbour) and Turkey (Begec) made favorable comments.

¶4. (SBU) Russia (Ulyanov) noted the Ukraine draft was relevant and that Russia was prepared to work with Ukraine to ensure the text drew on the "set language" developed in other international forums. Russia also noted the "imbalance" in that the text did not reference the peaceful uses of nuclear energy nor did Russia approve of the singular reference to the Chemical Weapons convention. (Note: The U.S. (Ellis)) during Working Group B (WGB) - reported it had shared its comments on the draft Ministerial Declaration directly with

Ukraine, underscoring the need for a reference to UNSCR 1540 among other points. The FSC Chair (UK-Gare) requested Ukraine to meet with Russia and the U.S. to work out the changes to the draft text prior to the next WGB. Ukraine, U.S., and Russia will meet to consolidate the draft on November 9. End note.)

Russia Rolls Out Proposal for VD99 Review

¶5. (SBU) Russia presented its proposed draft Ministerial Decision calling for a review of Vienna Document 1999 (VD99) contained in (FSC.DEL/203/09). Ulyanov said the reasons for the review were "understood," calling the document "aged." He said only half of VD99 works and it continues to become less effective and needed to be "brought in line with the changed realities." He argued for a review to identify provisions that would need to be updated or expanded, and that the findings would need to be addressed. He called for a collaborative approach for comparing "national vantage points." Ulyanov noted the Russian proposal was developed to avoid a "radical rework of the text." The results of the review would culminate in a report to the 2010 Ministerial in Astana, without prejudice to what the report would say, he emphasized. Finally, Russia pointed out it had inserted language requesting assistance from the OSCE SecGen for the

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development of statistical data points on the implementation of VD99 over the past ten years.

¶6. (SBU) The U.S. (Neighbour) delivered reftel guidance opposing this ill-considered initiative. He added that Russian criticism of VD99 was surprising since Russia clearly benefitted the most among participating States from VD99's provisions, conducting almost as many inspections and evaluations as all other states combined. He also noted U.S. concern with the open-ended nature of the proposed review, underscoring that the timing for the Russian proposal was ambitious for the Athens Ministerial meeting in December.

Chorus of Allied Support for Russia's VD99 Proposal

¶7. (SBU) Turkey (Begeg) noted Russian views of VD99 were well-known and the draft would receive "detailed analysis," but in principle Turkey supported an assessment of VD99. Germany (Genrich) reminded the FSC that it has previously indicated interest to review VD99 "to adapt to the realities in Europe." The first step would be to examine VD99 together. Genrich said, in the context of the Corfu process it was clearly necessary to signal "a willingness" and "renewed commitment" to deal with these issues, thus Germany supported the Russian proposal.

¶8. (SBU) Italy (Negro) echoed the German sentiment, and called its support for a review of VD99 a "position of principle" in that it was something that always existed in the OSCE toolbox and "fit within the tradition of the FSC and OSCE." Negro added -- like Turkey and Germany -- Italy was "ready to commit to discuss the draft decision." France (Simonet) and Spain (Sabadell) made similar comments. France added, however, that substance was important, and if consensus could not be achieved on the review of VD99, it was willing to seek other means to do the substance of the work. Portugal and Luxembourg also supported "the principle of review," echoing France's observations. Kazakhstan said it was looking into co-sponsoring the draft decision alongside Russia and Belarus. Romania (Matei) preferred a gradual, "step-by-step" approach for targeted improvements of VD99 "as a matter of principle." Greece said it would examine the Russian proposal "with great interest."

¶9. (SBU) Comment: The majority of delegates were uninstructed. The next FSC may be quite animated and probably further polarizing views on the relationship between VD99 and the Corfu Process. Russia's Ulyanov will continue to insert VD99 review language at every opportunity now,

claiming he has been given the green light "in principle" by so many NATO Allies. Although Ulyanov admitted to USDel (Neighbour) he knows Russia's proposal cannot be adopted in Athens, he said he sees it as a useful tool to pressure the U.S. End comment.

SA/LW and MANPADS Disposal

¶10. (SBU) Under Any Other Business, Denmark (Petersen) reported on 30K Euros contribution to the Small Arms Light Weapons (SA/LW) and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SCA) project in Georgia, noting, however, that because there is no OSCE presence, the project is in need of an implementing partner. Denmark appealed to the CPC for assistance in this matter. Denmark also announced a 50K Euro contribution for the Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) project in Ukraine. He noted this was the first contribution to the 360K Euro budget, and asked for other donors.

¶11. (SBU) The CPC (Salber) noted that the final Report on Implementation of MANPADS Disposal Project in Cyprus was available (FSC.GAL/118/09). Salber praised the project for its strong organization, level of expertise among the EOD teams, and "outstanding levels of cooperation and transparency." Cyprus expressed appreciation for U.S. and UK assistance and contributions, and showed a short video of the actual destruction ceremony. The U.S. (Neighbour) made a

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statement in support of the project.

Working Group "B") Russia Seeks to Add Issues to FSC Load

¶12. (SBU) Russia (Ulyanov) shared its suggestions for changing the draft decision on "Issues Relevant to the FSC" that is to be forwarded to the Athens Ministerial Council (MC.DD/8/09/Rev.1). Ulyanov argued for taking into account "the factors that have led to the European Security Dialogue" so that Ministers can "specify" the structure and agenda for the FSC. He cited a need to concentrate on "a common deliberation on ways to improve the implementation of OSCE principles in the political-military arena." He emphasized the problem was not the OSCE principles themselves, but how they were implemented. (Comment: it was difficult to discern whether the irony was lost on most delegates. End comment.)

¶13. (SBU) Ulyanov went on to call the current arms control regime "impoverished." He accused "some" participating States of selective discrimination when it comes to applying OSCE principles. Ulyanov pointed out that the "U.S. view" of the applicability of crisis prevention mechanisms should be extended to all political-military documents in the OSCE. Consequently, Ulyanov called for a collective effort to review all current political-military instruments because the response to crisis situations is not effective. He added that the draft decision on VD99 review was "a case in its own right, meriting separate consideration."

¶14. (SBU) Most delegates had not seen Russia's drafting suggestions (FSC.DEL/204/09); they were not circulated electronically until 4 pm, Wednesday afternoon. Those who had seen the paper focused their initial remarks on Op. 2, 4th bullet: "Elaborate, in parallel with the Permanent Council, a single set of principles for the resolution of conflicts to be applied equally to every crisis situation in the OSCE area." France (Simonet) warned that such a set of principles would be too minimalist to be effective since every crisis is different. The Netherlands (Kleinjan) called the Russian changes "ambitious." Italy (Negro) said it could "see the rationale" behind the Russian changes. Azerbaijan (Huseyinli) questioned whether the FSC Issues document was the right place to insert language on post-conflict resolution. Latvia warned not to prejudge Corfu discussions through the FSC Issues paper.

¶15. (SBU) Ulyanov elaborated that the proposed set of

principles would be applied equally so that some States would not "twist and turn" OSCE instruments depending on the circumstances. He said, for example, there should be basic "codified" rules such as non-use of force; the principle of using diplomatic means to resolve crises; and a step-by-step formula that would require consent from the parties to the conflict. Ulyanov noted the Russian approach was derivative from the scope of the Corfu process for specialists to deal with these aspects of security, adding "better than what one would find in the HDIM. I see no contradiction (with Corfu)." (Note: following Georgia's intervention, discussion devolved to further exchanges on the merits of how to reference the "armed conflict of 2008." End note.) The UK Chair concluded there was need for an informal meeting of WGB either before or after the next FSC plenary to resolve some of the questions raised with the Issues paper. (Comment: In that most delegates are uninstructed, it is apparent that the UK is buying time to walk back some of the Russian suggestions. End comment.)

Working Group "A") Russia continues its thrust

¶16. (SBU) (Note: Working Group "A" was convened in the afternoon because the exchanges on Russia's proposals in the plenary and WGB spilled over the allotted time. End note.) Russia (Geyvandov) presented its changes to the Draft Decision on the Agenda and Modalities of the 20th Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting (FSC.DD/0/09). Russia inserted language specifically calling for a "broader

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assessment of implementation of the agreed CSBMs and the relevant OSCE instruments with a view to identifying possible shortcomings and areas for improvements." There were no substantive comments to the Russian language since delegates were seeing the suggestions for the first time. The other draft decisions on use of digital cameras (FSC.DEL/124/09/Rev.1) and the Russian Food-for-Thought on VD99 implementation (FSC.AIAM/2/09) remain on the agenda. Finland joined as a co-sponsor of the Update of FSC Decision 15/02 on Expert Advice on Implementation of Section V of the OSCE Document on SALW (FSC.DEL/193/09/Rev.1), which is expected to move to plenary following the next WGA meeting.

¶17. (SBU) The UK Chair (Gare) noted November 6 was the deadline for incorporating substantive changes to the FSC Chairman's several Progress Reports (on SALW; SCA; Code of Conduct on Political-Military Aspects of Security; and Efforts in the Field of Arms Control Agreements and CSBMs). The Reports will be forwarded to the publishers the following week.

¶18. (U) The next FSC Plenary and Working Groups will be held November 11.
FULLER